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Did You Know?

- DNR was formed in 1957, by consolidating portions of several state agencies and boards, including the Commissioner of Public Lands, the Division of Forestry, and the State Forest Board.
- DNR is led by the Commissioner of Public Lands, a statewide elected official. Twelve people have been elected to the position since the office was created at statehood in 1889. The current Commissioner, Doug Sutherland, took office January 2001.
- DNR has 1,300 permanent employees geographically dispersed in 200 communities.

DNR MANAGES A DIVERSITY OF LANDS

The more than 5 million acres that DNR manages cover a wide range of landscapes and are managed to meet specific goals laid out in law and policy.

Trust lands

Nearly 3 million upland acres are state trust lands managed to benefit specific beneficiaries. Trust lands help support public schools, universities and colleges, Capitol buildings, prisons, state institutions, local services in many counties, and the state General Fund. Different lands generate trust income in different ways:

- Forest lands — 2.1 million acres
 - sales of timber and special forest products (florist greens, poles, and mushrooms).
 - leases for communication towers, utility easements, and public use sites

- Agricultural, grazing, and range lands — 1.2 million acres (420,000 acres also counted as forest land)
 - Lease or permit agreements for:
 - grazing (primary use) – 450,000 acres
 - forested grazing (secondary use) – 420,000 acres
 - cultivating grain, row crops, vineyards, and orchards – 135,000 acres
 - wildlife habitat and conservation reserve – 195,000 acres

Aquatic lands

About 2.4 million acres are tidelands, shorelands, and beds of navigable waters. DNR manages these as a public trust and works to:

- encourage direct public access.
- foster water-dependent uses.
- ensure environmental protection.
- utilize renewable resources.

Income from aquatic land leases and geoduck sales supports aquatic land management and grants for waterfront access and restoration.

Natural areas

About 114,400 acres are natural areas that protect high quality examples of Washington's natural heritage, and provide opportunities for research, education, and low-impact use:

- 85,750 acres in 27 Natural Resources Conservation Areas.
- 28,650 acres in 47 Natural Area Preserves.

DNR PROVIDES A VARIETY OF SERVICES

Through its staff of scientists, land managers, cartographers, administrators, and other professionals, DNR provides a wide range of services, including:

Public use

- DNR manages 143 recreation sites and over 1,000 miles of trail, with more than half the miles maintained by user volunteers.
- DNR-managed lands host 11 million visitor days per year for activities such as education and research, hiking, hunting, fishing, and boating.

Resource protection

- DNR protects 12 million private and state-owned forested acres from wildfire, with about 1,100 firefighters and support staff, including 500 permanent employees who have other duties in the agency.
- DNR administers the state forest practices rules, which guide harvesting, road-building and other work in the woods on 12 million acres of non-federal forest lands.

Technical assistance

- DNR offers maps, aerial photos and geographic data to landowners, communities, and professionals.
- DNR geologists aid community planning by providing information on geologic hazards such as earthquakes.